

Redeeming Work
Your Work Will Test and Stretch Your Faith, Part 1
Ephesians 5:1-18

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, Oct. 15, 2017

Here is what we bump up against in a fallen broken world today. Even though work is good and is a reflection of God, it is hard. It is likely to be the context in which your faith is tested and stretched the most.

I. What Are Some of the Biggest Dangers You'll Face in the Workplace?

A. Your Work Pace Can Leave No Space for Your Own Humanity and Your Desperate Need for Unhurried Time with God – and that's a Recipe for Spiritual Disaster

You do need to control what you can control, like when you go to bed, when you get up, and when you meet with God.

Those 3 things work in tandem together like a three-fold cord that impacts your life in greater ways than you could ever imagine.

Fatigue not only makes cowards of us all, it also makes you so much more vulnerable to all kinds of sinful temptations that are going to confront you in the workplace.

It may not sound very spiritual, but when you show up at work day after day on the ragged edge of exhaustion, you are much more vulnerable to stepping into all kinds of sin.

Going to bed earlier is an issue of humility. I'm saying, 'God, I am human, I am limited, I am frail, and so I'm going to trust You with everything that's still undone, and I'm going to leave it all with you while I sleep, because You are God and I am not!'

Don't moan about what you can't control. Sit down and figure out what you can control, and then make a 'Stop Doing' list so that you can focus on what you should be doing most.

B. Your Flesh Can Be Lulled into All Kinds of Sinful Temptations – and that's a Recipe for Moral Disaster

1. You'll Be Tempted to Join in Crass Joking and Conversation

Ephesians 5:4 "Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving."

One way that you can stand out as a Christian is to not get caught up in crass joking and conversation

2. You'll Be Tempted by Sexual Sin

As you work together with others in the marketplace, it is understandable that healthy friendships are forged, but that also means there are numerous opportunities to step across the line and pursue more intimate relationships.

Joseph's story is a good reminder that the immediate consequences of God-honoring obedience are not always what we would desire.

If you're headed into the workplace only committed to not stepping into gross sexual sin, you are a casualty waiting to happen.

Ephesians 5:3 "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity..."

Long before you commit gross sexual sin, you were already guilty of dozens of little compromises that you thought were no big deal.

C. Your Lifestyle Can Drive You to Work More Hours Just to Pay for All the Stuff You're Piling Up – and that's a Recipe for Financial Disaster

Once you step onto that path of piling up more stuff, there is no end to it. Your job may be difficult, but it will start to feel horrific.

You may need to repent and reduce your economic lifestyle so that you can embrace a simpler and much more joyful life.

The daily pressure of being financially overextended is a recipe for physical maladies and spiritual depression, as well as interpersonal conflicts.

'Porniea' or sexual sin gets its hooks into a person and starts to own them or rule them, so does 'Pleonexia.' What starts out as the simple pleasure of owning and enjoying more turns into the nightmare of being trapped under the weight of living for stuff, while it squeezes the very life out of your soul.

Possessions by their very nature put you at risk, because every possession has the potential to possess you. So you want to think long and hard about how much stuff you're piling up.

In any culture where God is largely absent, and that's where we are today, people will try to fill that vacuum with any and everything, from sex to power to money!

The root problem goes all the way back to the book of Genesis, where we started in this series and saw in Genesis ch. 3 that the real problem, in and outside of the workplace, is our sin problem that alienates us from God and other people around us. It causes us to forget God and use other people while frantically trying to compensate for feeling so naked and powerless.

The only way any of that is going to change is through the power of the Gospel, as one man or woman at a time comes into a right relationship with the God of the universe through His Son – Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:18 “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.”

God never designed marriage or family or work to go well without you and me being filled with His Spirit! You can't do these things without God in your life.

He never promised it would be easy, He promised He would be with you in your weakness.